

REMARKS

Claims 1–13 and 25-33 are pending in the application. Claims 1-11 and 25 through 33 have been allowed. Claims 12 and 13 remain rejected. With this amendment independent Claim 12 has been amended to further clarify the claimed invention.

Claims 12 and 13 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Bellasalma, U.S. Patent 3,703,572. The Examiner states that Bellasalma discloses or suggests the claimed procedure including the steps of fabricating at least one molded part using a prefabricated magazine, simultaneously demolding the magazine and molded part as a composite, and removing the molded part from the prefabricated magazine or mold. The Examiner states that would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill to simply reuse the prefabricated mold to form an additional molded part in instances where the mold was not damaged in order to avoid needless mold duplication. The Examiner further states that Bellasalma appears not to teach the forming of the microstructure molded part but suggests that his method has such a capability by stating in column 3, lines 6-7 that the Bellasalma method is capable of reproducing the "slightest imperfection" from the surface of the pattern or model.

It is respectfully submitted that the Bellasalma reference cannot teach or suggest independent Claim 12 or Claim 13 dependent thereon.

Applicants' claimed prefabricated magazine is much different than mold 18 taught by Bellasalma. As explained in the application on page 1, last full paragraph, microcomponents are packaged in a magazine prior to being mounted, and many microcomponents can be mounted at once utilizing the production process claimed in independent Claim 12.

Additional benefits of the claimed procedure according to independent claim 12 are further explained on page 4, second full paragraph. It is explained that positions of the different molded parts to each other, which are defined by the tool during replicative fabrication of microcomponents and fixated by the invented replicated fabrication of

microcomponents are maintained in the magazine. This allows for very precise mounting of the microcomponent, since this new ordered condition of the molded parts allows microcomponent handling with very small mounting tolerances. Additionally, this provides for very cost effective storage and transportation of the microcomponents, since they can be moved jointly.

Independent claim 12 has been amended to state that the prefabricated magazine carries the at least one microstructure molded part by holding contact of at least parts of the side surfaces of the microstructured molded part. Support for this limitation is found in the application in originally filed Claim 6, as well as on page 6 of the application. As stated in the third and fourth paragraphs on page 6, the magazine provides holding surfaces for a gripper which does not have to touch the microcomponents. Such an arrangement generally provides protection for the microstructures of the microcomponents when a magazine contacts microcomponents only on the side surfaces. Easier detachment and removal of the microcomponents from the magazine is attained as the microcomponents can be easily pressed out by hand or by machine without much force.

On the other hand, the Bellasalma reference utilizes thin sheet mold 18 formed of a polymer or thermoplastic elastomer which is especially adapted for vacuum forming, see column 3, lines 14-17. Mold 18 is used as a mold for replicative forming of pattern 10. Mold 18 and casting 42 are illustrated in Fig. 9. Mold 18 completely covers the upper side of casting 42. Mold 18 cannot be handled without touching casting 42.

Mold 18 does not show the characteristic figures of a magazine as known in the art and described in the present invention and therefore, cannot be compared to the magazine claimed in independent Claim 12.


Furthermore, as illustrated Fig. 9, the Bellasalma reference cannot teach or suggest as claimed in independent Claim 12 wherein the prefabricated magazine contacts at least parts of the side surfaces of the microstructure molded part. Fig. 9 illustrates that the side surfaces of casting 42 are open and not touched by mold sheet 18.

It is respectfully submitted that the claims are in condition for allowance and a notice of such is earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner have any questions or

concerns regarding this response a telephone call to the undersigned is greatly appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,

HUDAK, SHUNK & FARINE CO. LPA


By: Daniel J. Hudak, Jr.
Registration No. 47,669

DJHjr/dp

2020 Front Street
Suite 307
Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44221
(330) 535-2220

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